

The Wisdom of the East Series

EDITED BY

L CRANMER-BYNG

DR S. A KAPADIA

ANTHOLOGY OF ANCIENT
EGYPTIAN POEMS

WISDOM OF THE EAST

ANTHOLOGY OF ANCIENT EGYPTIAN POEMS

COMPILED BY
C ELISSA SHARPLEY



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EDITORIAL NOTE

THE object of the Editors of this series is a very definite one. They desire above all things that, in their humble way, these books shall be the ambassadors of good-will and understanding between East and West—the old world of Thought and the new of Action. In this endeavour, and in their own sphere, they are but followers of the highest example in the land. They are confident that a deeper knowledge of the great ideals and lofty philosophy of Oriental thought may help to a revival of that true spirit of Charity which neither despises nor fears the nations of another creed and colour. °

L CRANMER-BYNG
S A KAPADIA.

NORTHBROOK SOCIETY,
21 CROMWELL ROAD,
KENSINGTON, S W.

INTRODUCTION

THE amount of Egyptian poetry which has come down to us is small in volume compared with our rich heritage of Greek and Roman literature comprising epic, drama, pastoral, satire, and song. But although scanty in bulk, it suffices to show us its complete harmony with the heroic sculpture and massive architecture which are the monopoly of ancient Egypt.

Egyptian hymns to the primeval gods are remarkable compositions, startling in their acknowledgment of the One Great Deity, in whom all lesser deities are comprehended.

“God is One and Alone, and there is none other with him,

God is the One, the One who has made all things

God is a Spirit, a hidden Spirit, the Spirit of Spirits, the great Spirit of Egypt, the divine Spirit

God is from the beginning, and has existed from the beginning.”

The beautiful hymn from which this extract is taken is worthy of comparison with the sublimest passages of Hebrew Scriptures. Indeed, the debt of the Israelites to their cruel taskmasters appears to be incalculable. Both their ritual and their literature owe much to the learning of the Egyptians.

Better known than the foregoing is the great Hymn of Akhenaton, which has such close points of resemblance with the one hundredth and fourth Psalm, although anticipating it by more than four hundred years.

Compare also the Hymn to the Sun God, Ra

“Hail to thee, Ra, Lord of Truth . . .
 . . . Lord of mercy, most loving,
 at whose coming men live
 opener of every eye
 proceeding from the firmament
 causer of pleasure and light
 at whose coming the gods rejoice,
 their hearts revive when they see him.”

The Egyptians were at all times a religious people, and their hymns overflow with reverence and awe. Like the Hebrew Psalms of a later day, these hymns abound in parallelisms and in alliteration. They are enriched by bold metaphor and apt simile, and, like the poems of the Hebrews, they gain in vivacity by the rapid transition from the first to the third person.

Rhyme was unknown, but rhythm was a marked feature of poetic utterance. Egypt had no use for rhyme or jingle. She was stately and austere in both religious and secular literature. Not for her the filigree of song, nor the dainty conceits of the full stop poem, beloved of ancient China.

Short lines were, however, very much in evidence, particularly in the love poems, and seem to indicate that music was relied on as an accompaniment and aid to melody.

“The ashes of our fathers
And the temples of our gods”

are the fountain of poetic utterance, at any rate in ancient civilisations; although proverbs and wise maxims play a distinguished part in a somewhat restricted orchestra. But undeniably the keynote is *Religion*.

- The Texts of the Pyramids, the offspring of far-reaching tradition, have the first claim upon our attention. They are our earliest record of Egyptian hymnology. But they speak to us of sacred poems of a far greater antiquity. The great Hymn of Osiris and Isis has already been adequately dealt with in this Series, and the Proverbs of Ptah-hotep, the royal scribe, have received likewise due recognition. The Pyramids indeed are a vast treasure-house of art, learning, and information.

Then follow poems conned from ancient Papyrus, or hieroglyphics engraved on walls of tomb and temple

Egypt has no grand epic like the *Iliad* or the *Æneid*. If ever she possessed them, they are, up to the present, lost to us. But we know not what a wealth of poetry the future may unfold. A hundred, nay, fifty, years ago, we knew very little of Egyptian literature in comparison with what we know to-day. Fifty years hence, our present knowledge may seem infinitesimal in the light of new developments. Science is continually opening fresh avenues to bygone knowledge, and elucidating old mysteries.

The enthusiasm and patient toil of excavators may reveal forgotten cities of the Atlantean and Egyptian, while akashic records await only the seeing eye and understanding heart to deliver their undying message.

In the place of *Iliads*, Egypt has some very fine hymns of triumph in honour of her victorious Pharaohs. Of these, the earliest is a spirited Hymn to Usertesen III of the Twelfth Dynasty, on his military triumphs. This hymn, taken from a Papyrus found at Kahun, is the most perfect specimen of Egyptian poetry that has come down to us. Its supposed date is about 2640 B.C.¹

“As the shadow of a great rock in a weary

¹ Sir Flinders Petrie, *History of Egypt*

land " So the Prophet Isaiah Of Usertesén, the unknown Egyptian poet writes .

" He is a floodgate, pouring forth streams of its water-floods "

And again

" for he is a bower letting every man lie down in the mid-day heat "

And again :

" for he is a refuge, shutting out the robber " . . .

" . . . for he is an asylum shielding the timid from his enemy . . . "

" . . . for he is a shade in the high Nile to provide coolness in the summer . "

" . . . for he is a warm corner of shelter in the winter "

" . . . for he is a rock shielding from the blast in a stormy day "

Than the above what eulogy could be more gratifying to a great monarch, whose ambition it was to be a father to his people no less than a terror to their foes ?

Similar benedictions are heaped on the head of Amenemhat III, constructor of the Great Labyrinth (Twelfth Dynasty) :

" He feeds those who tread in his path,
The King is food and his mouth is increase "

The great warrior, Thothmes III, sometimes spoken of as the Napoleon of Egypt (and of whom Napoleon is supposed by some to be the reincarnation), was extolled by the priests of the god Amen, whose revenues were augmented by his victories. In a long hymn the god acknowledges the valour of his faithful son, but reminds him that his triumphs are due to the protection and inspiration of his guardian deity. It is Amen speaks ¹

“I make them (thy foes) behold thy Majesty
like the hovering hawk
Which seizes with its glance whatever pleases
him.
I came and thou smotest the lands in
front
The dwellers upon the sand thou hast fettered
alive
I make them to behold thy Majesty like the
jackal of the South
A hidden wanderer, he passes through the
land
I protect thee, my beloved son,
The powerful bull who rose up as King in
Thebes,
Whom I have begotten out of my loins,
Tehuti-mes, who lives for evermore,
Who has shown all love to my being . . . ”

¹ Brugsch-Bey, *History of the Pharaohs*

Like Napoleon, his prototype fully realised the value of sacerdotal favour

But the greatest of these patriotic poems is the Song of Pentaur, in honour of the personal valour of Rameses II in his great fight with the Hittites, basely stigmatised "the vile Kheta." A very spirited version of this heroic song is given in the *History of Egypt* by Brugsch-Bey, and also in the *History* of Sir Flinders Petrie.

Like Henry of Navarre in the Battle of Ivry, Rameses was the sole hero of this memorable day. Never was the "white plume of Navarre" more conspicuous than was the chariot of Rameses the Great, when before the walls of Kadesh the young Pharaoh dashed headlong into the thick of his assailants¹

"He alone, by himself, none other with him"

"... There was never a chief with me, there was never a chariot

There was never an officer of the troops, never a horseman,

There remained not one of them for fighting along with me"

He omits to mention the trained lion which ran beside his chariot, and must have been a valuable asset, though he does full justice to the courage of his magnificent steeds, Mut and

¹ Sir Flinders Petrie, *History of Egypt*

Victory in Thebes, to whom he decreed henceforth royal dainties from the table of their grateful sovereign Menna, the charioteer, is likewise immortalised in this fine poem—but not for valour, for Menna's heart had failed within him

It is noteworthy that the Egyptians of antiquity evince a love of animals and consideration for their welfare quite unapproached by Egyptians of to-day. Rameses was conscious of his own prowess, but like Thothmes, and all really great men, he ascribed his valour to the presence of his god.

“Steady yourselves, steady your hearts,
My soldiers and my chariots
Behold ye these my mighty acts
I am alone It is Amen who sustains me. His
hand is towards me

When Menna, my charioteer, beheld that,
Namely, multitudes of chariots completely
round me,
He became weak, his heart failed,
A very great terror went through his limbs . .
Steady, steady thy heart, my charioteer,
I am going among them like the striking of a
hawk.
I shall slay in striking, and throw them in the
dust

What is in thy heart about these Asiatics ?
By Amen, they are extremely vile in ignoring
God.
And never shall shine his face on millions of
them."

Little wonder that they plunged like crocodiles
into the Orontes

This song is full of fire and abounds in spirited
and picturesque touches Of its kind, it is the
finest poem I have come across in either ancient
or modern literature The Scribe Pentaur was
undeniably a great poet

Another national song of thanksgiving dates
from the reign of Merenptah, who disputes with
Tutankhamen the likelihood of being the Pharaoh
of the Exodus, and is a song of thanksgiving for
his great victory over the Libyans It is an
extremely graphic and vital poem, portraying
• with vivid detail the ignominious flight of Maumey
or Mauroy, son of Did, the King of Libya ¹

"The wretched, conquered Prince of Libya, fled
under the protection of the night, alone, without
the plume upon his head his feet failed, his
women were taken away before his face, the
provisions of his store were plundered He had
no water-skin for his sustenance his brothers
plotted his murder, his officers fought with one
another their camp was burned to ashes, his

¹ Sir Flinders Petrie, *History of Egypt*

whole property became the booty of the soldiers. Arriving in his country, he lamented. Everyone in his country was ashamed to receive him. ' Punished Prince, Evil Fate, Feather ' called to him all the inhabitants of his city."

No ornament here, yet the bald recital has its own pathos. In enumerating other nations which had been brought low, the poem makes mention of the people of Israel.

" The people of Israel is laid waste, their crops are not. Palestine has become a widow by Egypt "

Here a very significant fact is made known to us in a line of poetry. It remains for future investigation to confirm its import.

With this song it is interesting to compare the triumphant song of Miriam for the overthrow of the hosts of this same Pharaoh in the Red Sea.

There remain the love-poems, many of which have been preserved in the Harris Papyrus, and three very remarkable philosophical poems of great antiquity.

Egypt has possessed many women who were skilled in state-craft, notably Nitokris, Hatshepsut, and Thi, but she has given us no woman poet. Ancient China has her Lady Pan, Greece her divine Sappho, and Arabia her Khansa, but it is an Egyptian princess who has the distinction of having inspired the greatest love-poem ever

written, even the Song of Songs, which is Solomon's

No Egyptian love-song can approach the royal masterpiece, but on a vastly lower plane the trend of composition is the same. Such songs abound in oriental sentiment and imagery and make small appeal to western intellects. By the courtesy of Mr Terence Gray extracts from some of these poems are inserted in the body of this volume

Of the philosophical poems, that in *Praise of Learning* is the least known. It recounts with some sense of humour the hardships attendant on the lot of toilers; how the barber is at the beck and call of all and sundry for so many weary hours

“ he wearies his hands to feed his belly
as bees feed by their labour ”

• How the blacksmith works at the furnace, till his fingers are like the skin of crocodiles, how the fields of the carpenter are of wood, and how the fisherman suffers continual danger from the crocodiles among the reeds. Only the scribe is exempt from these hardships, and able to hold up his head among the noblest of the land, with no sense of inferiority

The Song of the Harper has been translated many times, and different versions have been

found in the Egyptian tongue Like the Book of Ecclesiastes, it speaks of the vanity of all things, and tells how one common doom awaits the greatest as the least—the grave where all things are forgotten, and from whence no man returns

“Therefore occupy yourself with pleasure daily, for no man is permitted to carry his possessions away with him”

This song is very ancient. It was sung in the courts of the Antefs of the Eleventh Dynasty, and probably long before them To the epicure of all ages *Carpe Diem* promises alleviation for past sorrows and future suffering The light-hearted Egyptian, with his love of music and delight in festivals, was by no means exempt from the gnawing prick of foreboding and regret

The song of the *Man Who was Weary of Life* is as ancient as the first man after Adam's fall, and as modern as the dreamer's sorrow of to-day.

No Christian saint has ever pictured the souls longing for another state of being more poignantly than this unknown poet of 2000 B C¹.

“This day is Death before my eyes ·
As when a man grown well again,
And rising from a bed of pain,
The garden sees

¹ By kind permission of Anthony Armstrong (Hutchinson & Co)

This day is Death before my eyes :
Like fragrant myrrh's alluring smell,
Like sitting 'neath the sails which swell
In favouring breeze
This day is Death before my eyes
- Like water-bosomed lotus scent,
Or when, the traveller, worn and spent,
At last drinks deep
This day is Death before my eyes
As when the soldier glimpses home,
As pent-up garden-waters foam
Down channels steep
This day is Death before my eyes .
As when, mist clearing from the blue,
The hunter's quarry leaps to view,
Like this is Death before my eyes
As when the captive, bound in pain,
Yearns sore to see his home again,
Like this is Death
While we draw breath,
We seek Life's prize . . .
The prize is . . . Death."

Translated by Anthony Armstrong.
(*When Nile was Young.*)

But the man who was weary of life did not look upon Death as the end of all so much as the beginning of delights, a place where justice reigns, where wrongs are righted, where Ra is ruler over all "He who is **TIETIE** shall indeed be like a

loving god, and he shall punish him who doeth wickedness. He who is there shall certainly stand in the Boat of the Sun, and shall bestow upon the temples the best offerings. He who is there shall indeed become a man of understanding who cannot be resisted, and who prayeth to Ra when he speaketh."

Although the outlook of this weary man was sorrowful exceedingly, he sorrowed not as those who have no hope.

Surviving poems of a miscellaneous character are so few that we cannot value them too highly, nor can we too ardently desire that new fragments may be unearthed and further records unfolded.

The poem in praise of learning proves the high honour accorded to the scribe, while the Instructions of Amenemhat I and the Hymn of Akhenaton show us that the very Pharaohs thought the pen worthy of their high calling. Father A₁, the friend and ultimate successor of Akhenaton, is credited with the authorship of the longer version of the hymn associated with the royal heretic. It is by the beauty, majesty, and exaltation of Egyptian hymns from the earliest ages that we are compelled to realise their lofty conception of the high and mighty One who inhabiteth Eternity. How widely different their ideal from the attributes assigned to Jupiter, or even the more ancient Cronus; comparable only to Israel's sublime vision of the great Jehovah.

The task of compiling this little volume (in very deed a labour of delight) has been sweetened by the courtesy and helpful advice of Sir E A Wallis Budge, who so generously accorded his permission to make use of his invaluable translations of many Egyptian hymns and poems

My warm thanks are due to Professor Breasted of the Chicago University for granting the transcription of the entire Hymn of Akhenaton, as translated by him in his *Development of Religion and Thought in Ancient Egypt*—a work of immense value to the student, and likewise to his publishers, Charles Scribner & Sons (America), and Messrs Hodder and Stoughton (London), for their courteous acquiescence in this permission

I am greatly indebted to Mr Terence Gray, the gifted author of two remarkable works, ———and in the *Tomb were Found*, and *Hatshepsut*, for graciously allowing the inclusion of his translation of Egyptian love-poems, taken from *Papyrus Harris* 500, and for advice and information

My warm thanks are also due to Mr Anthony Armstrong for the use of two poetical adaptations from the *Song of the Harper* and *The Man who was Tired of Life*

I desire to thank Mr John Murray for permission to make extracts from the translations of Heinrich Brugsch-Bey, and the publishers of *Dwellers on the Nile* (Religious Tract Society) for seconding the kind permission of Sir E A

Wallis Budge to make use of notable quotations from that fascinating book, and also Messrs Scribner and Messrs Hodder and Stoughton for their courtesy and help with reference to the translations of Professor Breasted

I have, moreover, been fortunate enough to make arrangements (through my 'editor) with Messrs Dent & Co for the inclusion of several beautiful selections from the *Egyptian Literature* of Sir E A Wallis Budge, without which this little work would have been sadly incomplete

Within its limits I have endeavoured to make my compilation as comprehensive as may be, and I trust it may be a source of instruction as well as pleasure to my readers

My best thanks are gratefully rendered to my poet friend, Sidney Matthewman, of the Swan Press, Leeds, without whose kindly intervention this little work would never have been undertaken.

C ELISSA SHARPLEY

TORQUAY,

January 12th, 1925

ANTHOLOGY OF ANCIENT EGYPTIAN POEMS

THE PYRAMID TEXTS

EXTRACT FROM HYMN TO THE SUN GOD

Translated by E A WALLIS BUDGE

HAIL to thee, Tem Hail to thee Kheprer, who
created himself

Thou art the High in this thy name of " Height "
Thou camest into being in this thy name of
" Kheprer "

Hail to thee, Eye of Horus (Egypt) which he
furnisheth with his hands completely

He permitteth not thee to be obedient to those
of the West

He permitteth not thee to be obedient to those
of the East

He permitteth not thee to be obedient to those
of the South.

He permitteth not thee to be obedient to those
of the North.

He permitteth not thee to be obedient to those
who are in the earth

For thou art obedient to Horus

He it is who hath furnished thee, he it is who
hath-builde thee, he it is who hath made thee
to be dwelt in

Thou doest for him whatsoever he saith unto
thee, in every place whither he goeth

Thou liftest up to him the water fowl that are in
thee

Thou liftest up to him the water fowl that are
about to be in thee

Thou liftest up to him every tree that is in thee

Thou liftest up to him every tree that is about
to be in thee

Thou liftest up to him the cakes and ale that
are in thee

Thou liftest up to him the cakes and ale that are
about to be in thee

Thou liftest up to him the gifts that are in thee

Thou liftest up to him the gifts that are about to
be in thee

Thou liftest up to him everything that is in thee

Thou liftest up to him everything that is about
to be in thee

Thou takest them to him in every place where
it pleaseth him to be

The doors upon thee stand fast shut like the god
Anmutef

They open not to those who are in the West

They open not to those who are in the East
They open not to those who are in the North
They open not to those who are in the South
They open not to those who are in the middle of
the earth

But they open to Horus

Pepi II, Sixth Dynasty.

EXTRACT FROM HYMN TO NUT (GODDESS OF THE SKY)

Pyramid Texts Pepi II

Translated by E A WALLIS BUDGE

O PERFECT Daughter, mighty One of thy Mother,
who art crowned like a King of the North,
Make this Pepi a spirit-soul in thee. Let him
not die

O Great Lady, who didst come into being in the
sky, who art mighty,

Who dost make happy, and dost fill every being
with thy beauty,

The whole earth is under thee, thou hast taken
possession of it

Thou hast encompassed the earth, everything is
in thy two hands

Grant thou that this Pepi may be in thee like an
imperishable star

Thou hast associated with Keb in thy name of
Pet (sky)

Thou hast united the earth in every place
O Mistress over the earth, thou art above thy
Father, Shu, thou hast the mastery over
him

He hath loved thee so much that he setteth himself
under thee in everything

Thou hast taken possession of every god for
thyself with his boat (?)

Thou hast made them shine like lamps

Assuredly they shall not cease from thee like the
stars

Let not this Pepi depart from thee in thy name
of "Hert"

PEPI II

EXTRACT FROM HYMN TO OSIRIS

From *The Papyrus of Am* (E A WALLIS BUDGE)

GLORY be to Osiris Un-Nefer, the great god who
dwelleth in Abydos, king of eternity, lord of
everlastingness, whose existence endureth for
millions of years

Eldest son of the womb of Nut (the sky goddess),
begotten by Keb (the Earth god), the hereditary
chief of the gods, lord of the crowns of the
South and North, lord of the lofty white crown,
prince of gods and men he hath received the
sceptre, the whip, and the rank of his divine
fathers

EXTRACT FROM HYMN TO OSIRIS 31

Let thy heart in Semt-Ament (the other world)
be content, for thy son Horus is established on
thy throne

Thou art crowned lord of Tatu (Busiris) and
Ruler in Abydos

Through thee the world flourisheth in triumph
before the power of Nebertcher (the Lord of
the uttermost limit)

He leadeth on that which *is*, and that which *is*
not yet, in his name of Taherstanef

He toweth along the earth by Maat (conscience)
in his name of Seker he is exceeding mighty
and most terrible in his name of Osiris he
endureth for ever and ever in his name of
Un-Nefer

Homage to thee, O King of kings, Lord of lords,
Prince of princes, who from the womb of Nut
hast ruled the world and Akert (the other
world)

Thy body is like bright and shining metal, thy
head is of azure blue, and the brilliance of the
turquoise encircleth thee.

O thou god An of a million of years, whose body
pervadeth all things, whose face is beautiful
in Ta-Tchesert (the Holy Land), grant thou to
the Ka of Osiris, the Scribe of An, splendour
in heaven, power upon earth, and triumph in
the other world

Grant that I may sail down to Tatu in the form
of a living soul, and sail up to Abydos in the

form of the Benu bird (the phoenix) That I
 may go in and come out without being stopped
 at the pylons of the Lords of the Other World
 May there be given unto me bread-cakes in
 the house of coolness, and offerings of food in
 Anu, and a homestead for ever in Sekhet Anu,
 with wheat and barley therefrom

EXTRACT FROM HYMN TO THE SUN GOD

Translated by E A WALLIS BUDGE Written in the
 hieratic characters upon slices of limestone preserved in the
 Egyptian Museum at Cairo

WELL dost thou watch, O Horus, who sailest
 over the sky, thou child who proceedest from
 the divine father, thou child of fire who shinest
 like crystal, who destroyest the darkness and
 the night
 Thou child who growest rapidly, with gracious
 form, who restest thy eye
 Thou awakenest men who are asleep upon their
 beds, and the reptiles in their nests
 Thy boat saileth on the fiery lake Neserser, and
 thou traversest the upper sky by means of the
 winds thereof
 The two daughters of the Nile-god crush for thee
 the fiend Neka; Nubti (i.e. Set) piercest him
 with his arrows Keb seizeth him by the
 joint of his back, Serget grippeth him by his
 throat

The flame of this serpent that is over the door
of thy house burneth him up The Great
Company of the Gods are wroth with him,
and they rejoice because he is cut in
pieces

The children of Horus grasp their knives, and
inflict many gashes on him

Hail! Thine enemy hath fallen, and Truth
standeth firm before thee!

When thou again transformest thyself into Tem,
thou givest thy hand to the lords of Akert
(i.e. the dead) Those who lie in death give
thanks for thy beauties when thy light falleth
on them

They declare unto thee what is their heart's
wish, which is that they may see thee again

When thou hast passed them by, the darkness
covereth them each one in his coffin

Thou art the lord of those who cry out to thee,
the god who is beneficent for ever

Thou art the Judge of words and deeds, the Chief
of Chief Judges, who stablisheth truth and
doest away sin

May he that attacketh me be judged rightly,
behold he is stronger than I am He hath
seized upon my office, and hath carried it off
with falsehood. May it be restored to me

HYMN TO OSIRIS

Translated by E A WALLIS BUDGE. Written in the hieratic characters on slices of limestone, now preserved in the Egyptian Museum, Cairo.

PRAISE be unto thee, O Thou who extendest
thy arms, who liest asleep on thy side, who
liest on the sand, the Lord of the earth, the
divine Mummy

Thou art the Child of the Earth Serpent, of
great age

Thy head and goeth round thy feet

Ra-Khepera shineth upon thy body, when thou
liest on thy bed in the form of Seker, so that
he may drive away the darkness that shroudeth
thee, and may infuse light in thy two eyes

He passeth a long period of time shining upon
thee and sheddeth tears over thee The earth
resteth upon thy shoulders, and its corners
rest upon thee as far as the four pillars of
heaven If thou movest thyself the earth
quaketh, for thou art greater than

The Nile appeareth out of the sweat of thy two
hands

Thou breathest forth the air that is in thy throat
into the nostrils of men divine is that thing
whereon they live

Through thy nostrils subsist the flowers, the
herbage, the reeds, the flags, the barley, the
wheat, and the plants whereon men live

If canals are dug . . and houses and temples are built, and great statues are dragged along, and lands are ploughed up, and tombs and funerary monuments are made, they all rest on thee It is thou who makest them They are on thy back They are more than can be done into writing There is no vacant space on thy back They all lie on thy back, and yet thou sayest not "I am overweighted therewith"

Thou art the Father and Mother of men and women they live by thy breath they eat the flesh of thy members "Pautti" (i.e. Primeval God) is Thy name

HYMN TO SHU

Translated by E A WALLIS BUDGE From the *Magical Papyrus* (Harris 501), preserved in the British Museum, written in hieratic characters

HOMAGE to thee O flesh and bone of Ra, thou first-born son who didst proceed from his members, who wast chosen to be the chief of those who were brought forth, thou mighty one, thou divine form, who art endowed with strength as the lord of transformations Thou overthrowest the Seba fiends each day The divine boat hath the wind behind it thy heart is glad

Those who are in the Antti boat utter cries of joy when they see Shu, the son of Ra, triumphant, and driving his spear into the serpent fiend, Nekau.

Ra setteth out to sail over the heavens at dawn daily

The goddess Tefnut is seated at thy head, she hurleth her flames of fire aganst thy enemies, and maketh them to be destroyed utterly.

Thou art equipped by Ra, thou art mighty through his words of power · thou art the heir of thy father upon his throne, and thy Doubles rest in the Doubles of Ra, even as the taste of what hath been in the mouth remaineth therein,

A will hath been done into writing by the lord of Khemenu (Thoth), the Scribe of the library of Ra-Harmakhis, in the hall of the temple of Anu (Heliopolis), stablished, perfected, and made permanent in hieroglyphs under the feet of Ra-Harmakhis, and he shall transmit it to the son of his son for ever and ever

Homage to thee, O son of Ra, who wast begotten by Temu himself.

Thou didst create thyself. Thou hast no mother
Thou art Truth, the lord of Truth, thou art the power, the ruling power of the gods

Thou dost conduct the eye of thy father Ra

They give gifts unto thee, into thy own hands
Thou makest to be at peace the great Goddess, when storms are passing over her.

Thou dost stretch out the heavens on high, and
dost establish them with thine own hands

Every god boweth in homage before thee, the
King of the South, the King of the North,
Shu, the son of Ra, life, strength, and health
be to thee

Thou, O great God, Pautti, art furnished with
the brilliance of the Eye of Ra, in Heliopolis,
to overthrow the Seba fiends on behalf of thy
father. Thou makest the Divine Boat to sail
onwards in peace

The mariners who are therein exult, and all the
gods shout for joy when they hear thy divine
name

Greater, yea, greater art thou than the gods in
thy name of Shu, son of Ra

EGYPTIAN HYMNS

HYMN TO AMEN

Translated by E. A. WALLIS BUDGE, The Papyrus on
which it is written is in Leyden

AMEN driveth away evils and scattereth diseases
He is the Physician who healeth the eye
without the use of medicaments He openeth
the eyes, he driveth away inflammation
He delivereth whom he pleaseth, even from the
Tuat (the other world)

He saveth a man from what is ordained for him
at the dictates of his heart

To him belong both eyes and ears, he is on every
path of him whom he loveth He heareth the
petitions of him that crieth to him He
cometh from afar to him that calleth, before a
moment hath passed

He maketh long the life of man, he cutteth it
short To him whom he loveth he giveth more
than hath been fated for him

When Amen casteth a spell upon the water and
his name is on the waters, if this name of his
be uttered, the crocodile hath no power The
winds are driven back, the hurricane is quelled
At the remembrance of him the wrath of the
angry man dieth down

He speaketh the gentle word at the moment of
strife He is a pleasant breeze to him that
crieth to him. He is the wise god whose plans
are beneficent

He is more helpful than millions to the man who
hath him in his heart

One warrior who fighteth under his name is
better than hundreds of thousands Indeed he
is the beneficent strong one He is perfect, and
seizeth his moment he is irresistible

All the gods are three, Amen, Ra, and Ptah,
and there is none like unto them He whose
name is hidden is Amen Ra belongeth to him
as his face, and his body is Ptah Their cities

are established upon the earth for ever, namely,
Thebes, Heliopolis, and Memphis

When a message is sent from Heaven, it is heard
in Anu (Heliopolis) and is repeated in Memphis
to the beautiful face (Ptah) It is done into
writing in the letters of Thoth (hieroglyphs)
and dispatched to the City of Amen with their
things The matters are answered in Thebes
. . His heart is understanding, his lips are
taste, his Ka is all the things that are in his
mouth.

He entereth, the two caverns are beneath his
feet The Nile appeareth from the hollow
beneath his sandals

His soul is Shu, his heart is Tefnut He is Heru-
Khuti in the upper heaven.

His right eye is day, his left eye is night He
is the leader of faces on every path

His body is Nu, the dweller in it is the Nile,
producing everything that is, nourishing
all that is He breatheth breath into all
nostrils

The Luck and the Destiny of every man are with
him

His wife is the Earth. He uniteth with her, his
seed is the tree of Life, his emanations are the
gram

EXTRACT FROM HYMN TO AMEN-RA

Translated by E A WALLIS BUDGE From *Papyrus* in
the Cairo Museum

HOMAGE to thee, dweller in Peace, Lord of joy
of heart, mighty one of crowns,
Lord of the Urrt crown with the lofty plumes,
With a beautiful tiara, and a lofty White Crown.
The gods love to behold thee
The double crown is stablished on thy head
Thy love passeth throughout Egypt
Thou sendest out light, thou risest with thy two
beautiful eyes
The Pat beings faint when thou appearest in the
sky,
Animals become helpless under thy rays
Thy loveliness is in the southern sky
Thy graciousness is in the northern sky.
Thy beauties seize upon hearts
Thy loveliness maketh the arms weak,
Thy beautiful operations make the hands idle,
Hearts become weak at the sight of thee

He is the form One, the Creator of everything
that is
The One only, the creator of things that shall be
Men and women proceeded from his two eyes
His utterance became the gods
He is the creator of the pasturage wherein herds
and flocks live, the staff of life for mankind

EXTRACT FROM HYMN TO AMEN-RA 41

He maketh to live the fish in the river
and the geese and the feathered fowl of the sky.
He giveth air to the feathered creature that is
in the egg He nourisheth the geese in their
pens

He maketh to live the water fowl
and the reptiles, and every insect that flyeth
He provideth food for the mice in their holes,
He nourisheth the flying creatures on every
bough

Homage to thee, O creator of every one of these
creatures, the One only, whose hands are many
He watcheth over all those who lie down to sleep,
he seeketh the well-being of his animal creation,
Amen, establisher of everything,

Temu-Herukhuti

They all praise thee with their words,
Adorations be to thee because thou retest among
us,

We smell the earth before thee because thou hast
fashioned us

All the animals cry out—Homage to thee

Every country adareth thee

to the height of heaven, to the breadth of earth,
to the depths of the Great Green Sea

The gods bend their backs in homage to thy
majesty,

to exalt the souls of their creator,

they rejoice when they meet their begetter
They say unto thee—Welcome O Father of the
fathers of all the gods,
suspender of the sky, beater out of the earth,
maker of things that are, creator of things that
shall be,
King, life, strength, and health be to thee Chief
of the gods,
we praise thy souls
inasmuch as thou hast created us Thou workest
for us thy children,
we adore thee because thou retest among us

Homage to thee, O maker of everything that is
Lord of Truth, Father of the gods,
Maker of men, creator of animals,
lord of the divine grain, making to live the wild
animals of the mountains
Amen, Bull, Beautiful Face,
Beloved One in the Apts,
Great One of diadems in the House of the Benben
Stone,
binding on the tiara in Anu,
judge of the two men (Horus and Set) in the
Great Hall

Chief of the Great Company of the gods,
One only, who hath no second,
President of the Apts,
Ani, President of his Company of the gods,

EXTRACT FROM HYMN TO AMEN-RA 43

living by Truth every day,
Khuti, Horus of the East
He hath created the Mountains of gold,
and the real lapis-lazuli by his will,
the incense of the natron that is mixed by the
Nubians,
and fresh myrrh for thy nostrils
Beautiful Face, coming from the Nubians,
Amen-Ra, lord of the throne of Egypt,
President of the Apts,
Am, President of his palace

King, One among the gods,
His names are so many, how many cannot be
known
He riseth in the eastern horizon, he setteth in the
western horizon.

He overthroweth his enemies at dawn, when he
is born each day
Thoth exalteth his two eyes
When he setteth in his splendour, the gods rejoice
in his beauties and the Apes (dawn-spirits)
exalt him
Lord of the Sektet Boat and of the Antet Boat,
They transport thee over Nu in peace
Thy sailors rejoice
when they see thee overthrowing the Seba fiend
and stabbing his limbs with a knife.

The flame devoureth him, his soul is torn out of
 his body,
 the feet of this serpent Nak are carried off

The gods rejoice, the Sailors of Ra are satisfied
 Anu rejoiceth,
 the enemies of Temu are overthrown
 The Apts are in peace
 The heart of the goddess Nebt-ankh is happy,
 the enemies of her lord are overthrown.
 The gods of Kher-aha make adoration to him
 Those who are in their hidden shrines smell the
 earth before him when they see him mighty in
 his power

O Power of the gods
 Lord of Truth, lord of the Apts
 in thy name of Maker of Truth,
 Lord of food, Bull of offerings,
 in thy name of Amen-Ka-Mutef,
 Maker of human beings, maker to be of
 creator of everything that is
 in thy name of Temu-Khepera

Great Hawk, making the body festal
 Beautiful Face making the breast festal
 Image with the lofty Mehen crown
 The two serpent goddesses fly before him
 The hearts of the Pat-beings leap towards him
 The Hememet beings turn to him

Egypt rejoiceth in his appearances
Homage to thee, Amen-Ra, Lord of the throne
of Egypt
His town, Thebes, loveth him when he riseth

HYMN TO THE ONE GOD (EXTRACT)

Translated by E A WALLIS BUDGE

God is One and Alone, and there is none other
with him.

God is the One, the One who has made all
things

God is a Spirit, a hidden Spirit, the Spirit of
Spirits, the great Spirit of Egypt, the divine
Spirit

God is from the beginning, and has existed from
the beginning

He is the primeval One, and existed when as yet
nothing existed He existed when as yet there
was nothing, and whatever is, He made it after
He was He is the Father of beginnings God
is Eternal He is everlasting, and without
end, Perpetual, Eternal. He has endured for
endless time, and will exist henceforward for
ever

God is hidden, and no one hath perceived his
form, no one hath fathomed his likeness, He
is hidden in respect of Gods and men, and is a
mystery to his creatures.

God is the Truth, he lives by Truth, he lives upon
Truth, he is the King of Truth

God is Life, and man lives through him alone

He bloweth the breath of life into their nostrils

God is Father and Mother the Father of fathers,
and the Mother of mothers

God begets, but he is not begotten He gives
birth to, but is not given birth to

He begets himself, and gives birth to himself

He makes, but is not made He is the Creator
of his own form, and the fashioner of his body

God is the Creator of heaven and earth, the
deep, the water, and the mountains God
stretches out the heavens, and makes firm the
earth beneath

That which emanates from his heart is performed
immediately, and when He has once spoken, it
actually comes to pass, and endures for ever
and ever

God is the Father of the gods, and the progenitor
of all deities

God is compassionate to those who fear him, and
hears those that cry unto him He protects
the weak against the strong God knows those
who know him

He rewards those who serve him, and protects
those who follow him

HYMN TO THE SUN GOD, RA

Translated by E. A. WALLIS BUDGE

HAIL to thee, Ra, Lord of Truth
 whose shrine is hidden, Lord of the gods
 Khepera in his boat
 at whose command the gods were made
 Atum, maker of men
 supporting their works, giving them life
 distinguishing the colour of one from another
 listening to the poor who is in distress
 gentle of heart when one cries unto him
 Deliverer of the timid man from the violent
 judging the poor, the poor and the oppressed
 Lord of wisdom, whose precepts are wise
 at whose pleasure the Nile overflows
 Lord of mercy most loving,
 at whose coming men live
 opener of every eye
 proceeding from the firmament
 causer of pleasure and light
 at whose goodness the gods rejoice,
 their hearts revive when they see him

Hail to thee for all these things
 the One alone with many hands,
 lying awake while all men lie asleep
 Amen, sustainer of all things

48 ANCIENT EGYPTIAN POEMS

Atum, Horus of the horizon
homage to thee in all their voices
Salutation to thee for thy mercy to us
protestations to thee who hast created us

HYMN TO AMEN-RA-HARMACHIS (EXTRACT)

Translated by E. A. WALLIS BUDGE, in *Dwellers of the Nile* Full translation by Professor Lushington in *Records of the Past*

THOU wakest beauteous Amen-Ra-Harmachis,
thou watchest in triumph,
Amen-Ra, lord of the horizon
O Blessed One, beaming in splendour,
towed by thy mariners, who are of the unresting
gods,
sped by thy mariners of the unmoving gods
Thou comest forth, thou ascendest, thou towerest
in beauty
thy barge divine careers wherein thou speedest,
blest by thy mother, Nut, each day
Heaven embraces thee
thy foes fall as thou turnest thy face towards the
West of heaven
Counted are thy bones, collected are thy limbs,
living thy flesh, thy members blossom,
thy soul blossoms, glorified is thy august form,
advanced thy state on the road to darkness
Ra hath quelled his impious foes
heaven rejoices, earth is in delight,

HYMN TO AMEN-RA-HARMACHIS 49

gods and goddesses are in festival to make
adoration to Ra-Hor,
as they see him arise in his bark
He fells the wicked in his season
the abode is inviolate, the diadem in its place .
the uræus has smitten the wicked

HYMN TO THE NILE

Vide Dwellers on the Nile, pp 110-111

BLESSED be the good god,
the Nun (heaven) loving Nile,
the father of the gods of the holy Nine,
dwelling on the waters,
the plenty, wealth, and food of Egypt
He maketh everybody live by himself,
riches are on his path,
and plenteousness is in his fingers
the pious are rejoiced at his coming
Thou art alone and self-created,
one knoweth not whence thou art
But on the day thou comest forth and openist
thyself
everybody is rejoicing
Thou art lord of many fish and gifts,
And thou bestowest plenteousness upon Egypt
The cycle of the holy Nine knowest not whence
thou art,
thou art their life,
For when thou comest their offerings are re-
doubled,

and their altars filled,
 and they are shouting when thou appearest
 He giveth light on his coming from darkness
 in the pastures of his cattle
 his might produceth all.
 What was not, his moisture bringeth to life
 Men are clothed to fill his gardens
 he careth for his labourers
 He maketh even and noontide,
 he is the infinite Ptah and Kabes
 He createth all work therein,
 all writing, all sacred words,
 All his implements in the North.

The Hymn is addressed to thee with the Harp
 it is played with a skilful hand to thee
 The youths rejoice at thee,
 Thy own children.
 Thou hast rewarded their labour
 There is a great one adorning the land
 an enlightener a buckler in front of men,
 quickening the heart in depression,
 loving the increase of all his cattle
 Mortals extol him, and the cycle of the gods
 Awe is felt by the terrible ones
 His son (Pharaoh) is made lord of all to enlighten
 all Egypt.
 Shine forth, shine forth, O Nile, shine forth,
 Giving life to his oxen by the pastures
 Shine forth in glory, O Nile

FROM THE BOOK OF THE DEAD

Chapter XVII

I AM that splendid bird Bennu which is in Heliopolis

What does this mean ?

The Bennu bird is Osiris who is in Heliopolis

I have set two feathers upon my head

What do these two feathers signify ?

The two feathers are the two uraei crowns
upon the head of my father Tmu

SONG OF THE HARPER

Translated by E A WALLIS BUDGE From the *Papyrus Harris* 500

The Poem that is in the Hall of the tomb of
the King of the South and the King of the North,
Antef whose word is Truth, and is cut in front
of the Harper

O good Prince, it is a decree,
And what hath been ordained thereby is well,
That the bodies of men shall pass away and
disappear,
Whilst others remain.

Since the time of the oldest ancestors,
The gods who lived in olden time,

Who lie at rest in their sepulchres,
The Masters and also the Shining Ones,
Who have been buried in their splendid tombs,
Their place is no more
Consider what hath become of them

I have heard the words of Imhotep and Herutataf,
Which are treasured above everything because
they uttered them.

Consider what hath become of their tombs
Their walls have been thrown down
Their places are no more
They are just as if they had never existed
Not one of them cometh from where they are
Who can describe to us their form or condition ?
Who can describe to us their surroundings ?
Who can give comfort to our hearts ?
And can act as our guide
To the place whereunto they have departed ?

Give comfort to thy heart,
And let thy heart forget these things
What is best for thee to do is
To follow thy heart's desire as long as thou
lvest

Anoint thy head with scented unguents,
Let thy apparel be of byssus
Dipped in costly perfumes,
In the veritable products of the gods.

Enjoy thyself more than thou hast ever done
before,
And let not thy heart pine for lack of pleasure.

Pursue thine heart's desire and thy own happiness.
Order thy surroundings on earth in such a
way
That they may minister to the desire of thy
heart
For at length that day of lamentation shall
come
Wherein he whose heart is still shall not hear the
lamentation,
Never shall cries of grief cause
To beat again the heart of a man who is in the
grave

Therefore occupy thyself with thy pleasure
daily,
And never cease to enjoy thyself

Behold a man is not permitted
To carry his possessions away with him
Behold there never was anyone who, having
departed,
Was able to come back again

SONG OF THE HARPER

Adapted by ANTHONY ARMSTRONG, *When Nile was Young*.

THAT which is here must pass away,
Thè life we live is but a day
Youth lives and loves and seeks its rest.
The past is gone, the present flies,
The babe is born, grows old, and dies
The Sun that rose sinks in the West
Of all these things, not one will stay,
So let us revel while we may

Come Lute and pipes are in thy hand
Behind thy chair the Harpers stand.
O let all care be cast away
See perfumed flowers are here to deck
The smoothness of thy darling's neck.
Let all be joy until the day
When we must seek the Silent Land—
The Silence of the Silent Land

POEM IN PRAISE OF LEARNING (EXTRACT)

Vide Dwellers on the Nile, pp 123-124

I HAVE seen violence, I have seen violence, give
thy heart after letters
I have seen one free from labours, consider there
is nothing beyond letters
Love letters as thy mother I make its beauty
to go in thy face It is a greater possession
than all honours

He who has commenced to avail himself, is, from
 his infancy, a counsellor
 He is sent to perform commissions
 He who does not go is as sackcloth
 I have not seen a blacksmith on a commission, a
 founder who goes on an embassy
 I have seen the blacksmith at his work at the
 mouth of the furnace,
 His fingers like the skin of crocodiles, he stinks
 worse than the eggs of fishes
 Every carpenter carrying tools, is he more at
 rest than the labourers ?
 His fields are of wood, his tools of metal at
 night when he is free, he does in addition
 work with his hands for the lighting of his
 house
 The barber is shaving till evening
 When he places himself to eat, he places himself
 on his elbows
 He places himself at street after street
 to seek after shaving
 He wearies his hands to feed his belly
 as bees feed by their labour

 I tell you the fisherman suffers more than any
 employment
 Consider, is he not toiling on the river ? he is
 mixed up with the crocodiles
 Should the clumps of papyrus diminish, then he
 is crying out for help

If he has not been told that a crocodile is not
 there,
 Terror blinds him
 Consider, there is not an employment destitute
 of superior ones
 Except the Scribe, who is the first For he
 who knows letters, he then is better than
 thee
 Should'st thou walk after great men, thou art
 to proceed with good knowledge
 Do not say proud words Be sealed in thyself
 alone

INSTRUCTION OF AMENEMHAT I TO HIS SON

History of Egypt, PROFESSOR BREASTED

HEARKEN to that which I say to thee,
 That thou mayest be king of the earth,
 That thou mayest be ruler of the lands,
 That thou mayest increase good.
 Harden thyself against all subordinates
 The people give heed to him who terrorises
 them,
 Approach them not alone
 Fill not thy heart with a brother,
 Know not a friend,
 Nor make for thyself intimates,
 Wherein is no end

When thou sleepest, guard for thyself thine own
heart

For a man has no people

In the day of evil

I gave to the beggar,

I nourished the orphan,

I admitted the insignificant,

As well as him who was of great account

But he who ate my food made insurrection.

He to whom I gave my hand aroused fear therein.

.

I was one who cultivated grain and loved the
harvest-god

The Nile greeted me in every valley

None was hungry in my years, none thirsted
then

Men dwelt in peace through that which I wrought,
conversing of me.

EXTRACT FROM HYMN TO USERTESEN III (TWELFTH DYNASTY)

Translated by PROFESSOR BREASTED, *History of Egypt*.
Published by Messrs Charles Scribner & Sons (America), and
Messrs Hodder & Stoughton (London) By kind permission
of the above

TWICE great is the king of his city, above a
million arms as for other rulers of men, they
are but common folk

Twice great is the king of his city he is as it
were a dyke, damming the stream in its water
flood

Twice great is the king of his city he is as it
were a cool lodge, letting every man repose
unto full daylight

Twice great is the king of his city he is as it
were a bulwark, with walls built of sharp stones
of Kesem

Twice great is the king of his city he is as
it were a place of refuge, excluding the
marauder

Twice great is the king of his city he is as it
were an asylum, shielding the terrified from his
foe

Twice great is the king of his city he is as it
were a shade, the cool vegetation of the flood
in the season of harvest

Twice great is the king of his city he is as it
were a corner warm and dry in time of
winter

Twice great is the king of his city he is as it
were a rock barring the blast in the time of
tempest

Twice great is the king of his city he is
as it were Sekmet to foes who tread on his
boundary

HYMN IN PRAISE OF THOTHMES III

Translated by HENRIET BRASCH BRY, in *Legg's under the Pharaohs*

Amen speaks

I CAME and thou smotest the princes of Zahi,
I scatter them under thy feet over all their lands
I make them behold thy Majesty like the beaming
sun

Thou shinest in sight of them in thy form.
I came, and thou smotest those who dwell in
Asia

Thou madest prisoners the shepherds of Ruthen
I make them behold thy Majesty in the panoply
of thy royal dignity

How thou graspest the weapons on thy war-
chariot

I came, and thou smotest the land of the East
Thou camest to those who dwell in the Holy
Land

I make them behold thy Majesty like the Star
Canopus,

Which pours out its light in a fiery glow,
When he disperses the morning dew

I came, and thou smotest the Land of the West
Kefa (Phœnicia) and Asebi (Cyprus) fear thee.

60 ANCIENT EGYPTIAN POEMS

I make them behold thy Majesty like a young
bull

Full of courage, his horns whetted, he is un-
approachable -

I came, and thou smotest the subjects of their
lords

The Land of Mathen trembles for fear of thee
I made them behold thy Majesty like a crocodile,
The terrible one in the water he is not to be
encountered.

I came, and thou smotest the islanders in the
midst of the Great Sea,

Thy war-cry is over them

I make them behold thy Majesty as the avenger
Who appears riding on the back of his victim.

I came, and thou smotest the Land of the
Thuhén

The People of the Uthént is under thy power

I make them behold thy Majesty as a lion with
a fierce eye,

Who leaves his den and stalks through their
valleys

I came, and thou smotest the hinder lands !

The circuit of the Great Sea is bound in thy
grasp

I make them behold thy Majesty like the hovering
hawk

Which seizes with his glance whatever pleases
him

I came, and thou smotest the lands in front

HYMN IN PRAISE OF THOTHEMES III 61

The dwellers upon the sand thou hast fettered
alive

I make them behold thy Majesty like the jackal
of the South .

A hidden wanderer, he passes through the land
I came, and thou smotest the Nomad tribes of
Nubia,

Even to the land of Shat which is in thy grasp
I make them behold thy Majesty like thy pair of
brothers

Whose hands I have united to bless thee .

I make thy two sisters shed on thee health and
welfare

My hands in the height of heaven ward off
misfortune

I protect thee, my beloved son,

The powerful bull, who rose up as King in Thebes,
Whom I have begotten out of my loins

Tehuti-mes, who lives for evermore,

Who has shown all love to my Being

Thou hast raised up my dwelling in long-enduring
works,

More numerous and greater than they have ever
been

A great gate guards [against the entrance of the
impious]

Thou hast established joyful feasts in favour of
Amen.

Greater are thy monuments than those of all
former Kings.

I gave thee the order to execute them,
 And thou hast understood it.
 Therefore I place thee on the seat of Horus for
 never-ending many years
 Conduct and guard the living generations

HYMN TO AMENEMHAT III

History of Egypt, PROFESSOR BREASTED (extract)

HE makes the Two Lands verdant, more than a
 great Nile
 He hath filled the Two Lands with strength.
 He is life, cooling the nostrils . . .
 The treasures which he gives are food for those
 who are in his following :
 He feeds those who tread his path.
 The King is food and his mouth is increase.

HYMN OF AKHENATON

Development of Religion and Thought in Ancient Egypt
 Translated by, and with the kind permission of, PROFESSOR
 BREASTED, of the University of Chicago, and the courtesy
 of Messrs Charles Scribner & Sons, and of Messrs Hodder &
 Stoughton, publishers

Universal Splendour and Power of Aton

THE dawning is beautiful in the horizon of the
 sky,
 O living Aton, Beginning of life

When thou risest in the Eastern horizon,
Thou fillest every land with thy beauty,
Thou art beautiful, great, glittering, high above
every land`
Thy rays, they encompass the lands, even all
that thou hast made
Thou art Re, and thou carriest them all away
captive
Thou bindest them by thy love,
Though thou art far away, thy rays are upon
earth
Thou art on high, thy footsteps are the day

Night

When thou settest in the western horizon of the
sky,
The earth is in darkness like the dead.
They sleep in their chambers,
Their heads are wrapped up
Their nostrils are stopped
And none seeth the other
While all their things are stolen
Which are under their heads
And they know it not
Every lion cometh forth from his den,
All serpents, they sting
Darkness
The world is in silence,
He that made them resteth in his horizon

Day and Man

Bright is the earth when thou riseth to the
horizon

When thou shinest as Aton by day
Thou drivest away the darkness
When thou sendest forth thy rays,
The Two Lands (Egypt) are in daily festivity,
Awake, and standing upon their feet
When thou hast raised them up,
Their limbs bathed, they take their clothing,
Their arms uplifted in adoration to thy dawning
(Then) in all the world they do their work.

Day and the Animals and Plants

All cattle rest upon their pasturage,
The trees and the plants flourish,
The birds flutter in their marshes,
Their wings uplifted in adoration to thee,
All the sheep dance upon their feet,
All winged things fly,
They live when thou hast shone upon them

Day and the Waters

The barques sail up-stream and down-stream
alike,
Every highway is open because thou dawnest
The fish in the river leap up before thee,
Thy rays are in the midst of the great green sea.

Creation of Man

Creator of the germ in woman,
Maker of seed in man,
Giving life to the son in the body of his mother,
Soothing him that he may not weep,
Nurse (even) in the womb,
Giver of breath to animate every one that he
maketh.
When he cometh forth from the body on
the day of his birth,
Thou openest his mouth in speech,
Thou suppliest his necessities

Creation of Animals

When the fledgling in the egg chirps in the shell,
Thou givest him breath therein to preserve him
alive
When thou hast brought him together,
To (the point of) bursting it in the egg,
He cometh forth from the egg
To chirp with all his might
He goeth about to chirp upon his two feet
When he hath come forth therefrom

The Whole Creation

How manifold are thy works
They are hidden from before (us),
O sole God, whose power no other possesseth

Thou didst create the earth according to thy
heart

While thou wast alone,
Men, all cattle, large and small,
All that are upon the earth,
That go about upon their feet
(All) that are on high,
That fly with their wings,
The foreign countries, Syria and Kush,
The land of Egypt

Thou settest every man into his place,
Thou suppliest their necessities
Every one has his possessions,
And his days are reckoned
The tongues are divers in speech,
Their forms likewise, and their skins are dis-
tinguished.

(For) thou makest different the strangers.

Watering the Earth in Egypt and Abroad

Thou makest the Nile in the Nether World,
Thou bringest it as thou desirest,
To preserve alive the people,
For thou hast made them for thyself,
The lord of them all, resting among them
Thou lord of every land, who risest for them,
The Sun of day, great in majesty
All the distant countries,
Thou makest (also) their life,

Thou hast set a Nile in the sky :
When it falleth for them,
It maketh waves upon the mountains,
Like the great green sea,
Watering their fields in their towns.

How excellent are thy designs, O lord of eternity
There is a Nile in the sky for the strangers,
And for the cattle of every country that go upon
their feet
(But) the Nile, it cometh from the Nether World
for Egypt.

The Seasons

Thy rays nourish every garden .
When thou risest they live,
They grow by thee,
Thou makest the seasons
In order to create all thy work .
Winter to bring them coolness,
And heat that they may taste thee,
Thou didst make the distant sky to rise therein,
In order to behold all that thou hast made,
Thou alone, shining in thy form as living Aton,
Dawning, glittering, going afar, and returning.
Thou makest millions of forms
Through thyself alone
Cities, towns, and tribes, highways and rivers,
All eyes see thee before them,
For thou art Aton of the day over the earth

PRAYER FOUND UNDER THE FEET OF AKHENATEN, SUPPOSED TO HAVE BEEN COMPOSED BY HIM

Taken from an article by WALTER OWEN in *Theosophy*,
September 1924.

I BREATHE the sweet breath which comes from
thy mouth
I behold thy beauty every day
It is my desire that I may hear thy sweet voice
even in the
North Wind, that my limbs may be made young
through love of thee
Give me thy hands holding thy spirit, that I may
receive it and live by it
Call thou upon my name unto Eternity, and it
shall never fail.

EXTRACTS FROM THE POEM OF PENTAUR

From *Egypt under the Pharaohs*, by H BRUGSCH-BEY

Rameses II

THE youthful King with the bold hand has not
his equal.
His arms are powerful, his heart is firm, his
strength is like that of the god of war, Mentu,
in the midst of the fight
He leads his warriors to unknown peoples

He had taken away all their goods and possessions to give to the people who accompanied him to the war

The Ambush

At the same time the miserable King of Kheta was in the midst of his warriors which were with him But his hand was not so bold as to venture to battle with Pharaoh.

Therefore he drew away the horsemen and the chariots which were numerous as the sand. And they stood three men in each war-chariot, and there were assembled in one spot the best heroes of Kheta, well appointed with all weapons for the fight They did not dare to advance They stood in ambush to the north-west of the town of Kadesh.

There Pharaoh's warriors and chariots gave way before them

. . . Then they came to tell the King .

Then the King arose like his Father, Mentu he grasped his weapons and put on his armour, just like Baal in his time

And the noble pair of horses which carried Pharaoh, and whose name was Victory in Thebes they were from the Court of King Rameses Meri-Amen

When the King had quickened his course, he rushed into the midst of the hostile hosts of Kheta, all alone no other was with him

When Pharaoh had done this, he looked behind him and found himself surrounded by 2,500 pairs of horses, and his retreat was beset by the bravest heroes of the king of the miserable Kheta, and by all the numerous peoples which were with him. And there were three men in each chariot, and they were all gathered together

(Typical transition from third to first person)

And not one of my princes, not one of my captains of the chariots, not one of my chief men, not one of my knights was there

My warriors and my chariots had abandoned me, not one of them was there to take part in the battle

Thereupon speaks Pharaoh "Where art thou, my Father, Amen? If this means that the father has forgotten his son, have I done anything without thy knowledge? or have I not gone and followed the judgments of thy mouth? Never were the precepts of thy mouth transgressed, nor have I broken thy commands in any respect. The noble lord and ruler of Egypt, should he bow himself before the foreign peoples in his way? Whatever may be the intention of these herdsmen, Amen should stand higher than the miserable one who knows nothing of God. Shall it be for nothing that I have dedicated to thee many and noble monuments, that I have filled thy temples

with my prisoners of war, that I have built to thee temples to last many thousands of years ? Never did I withhold my hand from doing that which thy wish required O Amen, I have acted for thee with a willing heart therefore I call on thee Behold now, Amen, I am in the midst of many unknown peoples in great numbers All have united themselves, and I am all alone no other is with me My warriors and my charioteers have deserted me I called to them and not one of them heard my voice But I find that Amen is better to me than millions of warriors, than hundreds of thousands of horses, than tens of thousands of brothers and sons, even if they were all united together in one place The works of a multitude of men are nothing Amen is better than they What has happened to me here is according to the command of thy mouth, O Amen, and I will not transgress thy command Behold I call upon thee at the uttermost ends of the earth "

Amen Harkens to His Cry

I was changed I was made like the god
Mentu
I hurled the dart with my right hand I fought
with my left hand
I was like Baal in his time before their sight

I had found 2,500 pairs of horses I was in the
midst of them but they were dashed in
pieces before my horses

Not one of them raised his hand to fight their
courage was sunken in their breasts, their
limbs gave way They could not hurl the
dart, nor had they the courage to thrust with
the spear

I made them fall into the waters just as the
crocodiles fall in.

They tumbled down on their faces one after
another

I killed them at my pleasure so that not one of
them looked back behind him, nor did another
turn round Each one fell, he raised himself
not up again.

There stood the miserable king of Kheta in the
midst of his warriors and his chariots to behold
the fight of the King. . They were all together,
the brothers of the king of Kheta, united in
one place to the number of 2,500 pairs of
horses They forthwith rushed right on, their
countenance directed to the flame of fire, i e
my face

I rushed down upon them

Like Mentu was I

I let them taste my hand in the space of a
moment

I dashed them down and killed them where they
stood

Then cried one of them to his neighbour, saying
 "This is no man Ah, woe to us He who is
 in our midst is Sutekh the glorious Baal is
 in all his limbs Let us save our lives let us
 try our breath "

(Transition from first to third person)

As soon as anyone attacked him, his hand fell
 down, and every limb of his body They
 could not aim either the bow or the spear
 They only looked at him as he came on in his
 headlong career from afar. The King was
 behind them like a griffin . .

Menna, the Charioteer

When Menna, my charioteer, beheld with his eyes
 how many pairs of horses surrounded me, his
 courage left him and his heart was afraid
 Evident terror and great fright took possession
 of his whole body. Immediately he spake to
 me—"My gracious lord, thou brave King, thou
 Guardian of the Egyptians in the day of battle,
 protect us We stand alone in the midst of
 our enemies Stop, O save the breath of life
 for us Give us deliverance, O protect us,
 King Rameses Meri-Amen "

Then spake the King to his charioteer—"Halt,
 stand Take courage, my charioteer I will
 dash myself down among them as a sparrow-

hawk dashes down I will slay them I will cut them in pieces I will dash them to the ground in the dust Why then is such a thought in thy heart ? These are unclean ones for Amen, wretches, who do not acknowledge the god "

The King Reproves his Faithless Warriors

My warriors, my charioteers, who have not taken part in the fight, a man does not succeed in obtaining honour in his city unless he comes and exhibits his prowess before his lord, the King Good will be his name if he is brave in battle By deeds, by deeds will such an one obtain applause Have I not given what is good to each of you that you left me, so that I was alone in the midst of hostile hosts ? Forsaken by you, my life was in peril, and you breathed tranquilly, and I was alone Could you not have said in your hearts that I was a rampart of iron to you ? Will anyone obey him who leaves me in the lurch when I am alone without any follower ? when nobody comes of the princes, of the knights, and of the chief men of the army to reach me out of his hand ? I was alone thus fighting, and I have withstood millions of foreigners, I all alone.

"Victory in Thebes" and "Mut is satisfied," my pair of horses, it was they who found me to strengthen my hand when I was all alone in the midst of the multitude of raging hosts. I will myself henceforth have their fodder given to them for their nourishment in my presence when I shall dwell in the palace, because I have found them in the midst of hostile hosts, together with the captain of the horsemen, Menna, my charioteer, out of the band of the trusted servants in the palace, who stay near me. Here are the eye-witnesses of the battle. Behold these did I find. . . .

Rameses as Mentu

The diadem of the royal snake adorned my head.
 It spat fire and glowing flame in the face of my enemies
 I appeared like the Sun-god at his rising in the early morning
 My shining beams were a consuming fire for the limbs of the wicked.
 They cried out to one another—"Take care, do not fall, for the powerful snake of royalty which accompanies him, has placed itself on his horse. It helps him. Everyone who comes in his way falls down. There comes forth fire and flame to consume his body."

The Return of the King in Peace

Then the King went in peace to the land of Egypt . . . All peoples came at his name, and their kings fell down to pray before his beautiful countenance The King reached the city of Ramses Meri-Amen, the great worshipper of Hokemkhu, and rested in his palace in the most serene humour, just like the sun on his throne And Amen came to greet him, speaking thus to him—"Be thou blessed, thou, our son, whom we love, Ramses Meri-Amen. May the gods secure to him without end many thirty years' feasts of Jubilee for ever on the chair of his father Tmu, and may all lands be under his feet "

THE CITY OF RAMSES

Extract from letter of Panbesa *Papyrus Anas* Vide *Egypt under the Pharaohs*, by H. BRUGSCH-BEY

MELONS with a taste like honey grow in the irrigated fields Its barns are full of wheat and durra and reach to heaven. Onions and sesame are in the enclosures and the apple-tree blooms The vine, the almond tree and the fig-tree grow in the gardens Sweet is their wine for the inhabitants of Kamit . The common people as well as the higher classes say—Come hither Let us celebrate to

him (Rameses II) his earthly and his heavenly feasts The youths of the Conqueror's City were perpetually clad in festal array
Fine oil was on their heads of fresh curled hair
They stood in their doors, their hands laden with branches and flowers from Pa-Hathor, and with garlands from Pahir, on the day of the entry of King Ramessu Meri-Amen, the god of War, Mentu, upon earth Delicious was the wine for the inhabitants of the Conqueror's City
Their cider was like their sherbets were like almonds mixed with honey
There was beer from Katı in the harbour, wine in the gardens, oil at the lake Sagabı, garlands in the apple orchards
The sweet song of women resounded to the tunes of Memphis
So they sat there with joyful heart, or walked about without ceasing.
King Ramessu Meri-Amen, he was the god they celebrated. . . .

SONG OF THE MAN WHO WAS WEARY OF LIFE

When Nile was Young. Translated by, and with the kind permission of, ANTHONY ARMSTRONG, and the courtesy of Messrs Hutchinson & Co, Publishers

THIS day is Death before my eyes
As when a man grown well again,
And rising from a bed of pain,
The garden sees

This day is Death before my eyes
Like fragrant myrrh's alluring smell,
Like sitting 'neath the sails which swell
In favouring breeze

This day is Death before my eyes
Like water-bosomed lotus scent,
Or when, the traveller, worn and spent,
At last drinks deep.

This day is Death before my eyes
As when the soldier glimpses home,
As pent-up garden-waters foam
Down channels steep.

This day is Death before my eyes
As when, mist clearing from the blue,
The hunter's quarry leaps to view,
Like this is Death before my eyes
As when, the captive, bound in pain,
Yearns sore to see his home again,
Like this is Death
While we draw breath,
We seek life's prize
The prize is Death

EXTRACTS FROM EGYPTIAN LOVE SONGS

And in the Tomb were Found From Papyrus Harris 500.
Translated by TERENCE GRAY, by whose kind permission
they are included in this volume. Published by Heffer &
Sons, Cambridge

O OVERHANGING Spray, my heart is in suspense. . . .
I have anointed mine eyes with kohl,
For I would appear with dazzling eyes,
When I hasten to thee beholding thy love
O man, wondrous to my heart, beautiful is this
my hour
Coming to me, it is an hour of eternity .
I will draw nigh unto thee in the field in which
I have made flowers to bloom,
And all sweet smelling plants
There are delightful canals which I have dug
with my hand
To refresh myself with the North Wind,
A beautiful place in which to walk, thy hand in
my hand,
My breast full of remembrance,
My heart joyous going both together.
It is an intoxicating draught for me to hear
thy voice,
And by hearing it I live
For me to see thee with every glance is
more profitable than eating, more than
drinking.

82 ANCIENT EGYPTIAN POEMS

O Beautiful Being, my heart would that I be
mistress of thy possessions

As thy lady of the house,
That, thy arm laid against thy arm,
Thou shalt embrace her whom thou lovest,
While to my heart which is on thy bosom
I murmur my supplications .
Ah thou,—art thou not health and life,
He who brings the joys of thy health to my heart
seeking thee ?

EGYPTIAN LOVE SONGS

And in the Tomb were Found Translated by TERENCE
GRAY, by whose kind permission they are included in this
volume Published by Heffer & Sons, Cambridge.

“ *Harris Papyrus 500* ” British Museum.

I HAVE no mercy of heart for thy love,
My love philtre which begets thy drunkenness,
I will not throw it away secretly,
But I will distil it at the Vigil of the Inunda-
tion,

As in Syria with branches of cypress,
In Ethiopia with palm-branches,
In the Highlands with tamarisk,
In the plains with papyrus stalks.
I will not listen to their counsels
Who bid me reject my desire.

I shall embark on the canal in spite of my
 orders,
 I shall bedeck my shoulders with myrtle,
 And I shall come to Ankhtau
 I shall address my prayer to every just God
 That my sister may be during the night
 Like the Living Source, as myrtles are like to
 Ptah,
 As water-lilies are like Sokht, blue lotus like
 Yditi,
 Pink lotus like Noftrytumu,
 That the white-walled City may grant
 That she illumine the earth with her beauties,
 And Memphis give the vases of unguent
 Which are placed before Nofriha.

The beautiful sister whom thy heart loveth
 comes in the fruit-gardens, O brother beloved,
 For my heart pursues those things which thou
 dost love,
 And all things that thou doest
 I say unto thee, "Behold the things that have
 happened."
 I am come to prepare my snare with my hands,
 My cage, and my hiding-place for all the birds
 of Puanit
 They swoop upon the Black Land laden with
 incense
 The first which cometh, he shall seize my worm-
 bait,

84 ANCIENT EGYPTIAN POEMS

Bearing from Puanit the fragrance which he
exhales,

His claws full of sweet-smelling resins

My heart desires that we take them together,

I with thee alone

I would make thee hear the plaintive cries

Of my bird anointed with beautiful perfumes

Thou beside me, with me

I will prepare my trap, O my beautiful one,

Going to the fruit-garden with my beloved

The cry of the wild goose resounds plaintively,

He has taken his worm-bait

But thy love drives me away

I do not know how to deliver myself from it

I shall take away my nets,

And alas, I shall say to my Mother,

To whom I go each day laden with captives,

"My snare to-day, I have not laid"

For thy love holds me captive

The wild goose flies away and settles,

He hails the granaries with his cry,

The flock of birds is floating on the stream

But I think of them no longer

I think of my love for thee only

For my heart is the other balance of thy heart,

And I cannot forsake thy beauties

RETRIBUTION

See *Egyptian Mythology*, By W MAX MULLER A Erman
in S.B A.W.

I AM one who swore falsely by Ptah, the Lord of
Justice

He made me see darkness in day-time

I shall tell his power to the one who knoweth
him not, as well as to the one who knoweth,

To the small and to the great,

Beware of Ptah, the Lord of Justice,

Behold he doth not overlook the wrong deed of
any man

Abstain from pronouncing Ptah's name wrongly,

Lo, he who pronounceth it wrongly,

Behold, he goeth to destruction.

He made me to be like a dog on the street

I was in his hand

He made me to be a spectacle for men and
gods,

Since I have been a man who wrought abomina-
tion against his master

Ptah, the Lord of Justice, is just to me

He hath afflicted me with punishment

Be merciful unto me

I have seen that thou art merciful

SILENT WORSHIP

See *Egyptian Mythology*, by W. MAX MULLER

THOU savest the silent, O Thoth,
Thou sweet well of water for him who is athirst
in the desert
It is closed for the garrulous :
It is open for the silent
When the silent cometh, he findeth the well :
The one that burneth with heat, him dost thou
refresh.

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NOTE

THEIR worship of animals was the most extraordinary feature of ancient Egyptian civilisation. It was as great a problem to the philosophers of Greece as to the savants of to-day. The crude and debasing presentment of their deities appeared, and still appears, strangely at variance with the lofty precepts of their moral code with regard to present life, and life also in the world to come.

Not only were the Egyptians an intensely religious people, but they were possessed likewise of scientific knowledge and artistic skill. Yet the gods whom they so highly revered were portrayed as less than human.

Symbols they doubtless were, but how unworthy of the immortal gods. Totemism has been suggested as a solution, but it is inadequate.

Even in the age of Mena, the earliest historic king, the Egyptians were considerably advanced in engineering science no less than in the goldsmith's art. They were very far removed from the primitive status of undeveloped humanity.

The inhabitants of the East, and more especi-

ally Egypt, are extremely conservative. The root of their religious observances must have dated back to immemorial antiquity

Egypt is now supposed (with more assurance than in the time of Plato), to have been a colony of Atlantis, a continent renowned for intellectual supremacy and moral degeneracy

It seems possible that hawk-, jackal-, and ibis-headed delineations—with many others—of their gods may be survivals of a bygone cycle, or even of a creation anterior to the creation of mankind. The vintage of historic fact is often pressed from legendary seed

The marvel of this strange system of observance is equalled by the long centuries of its duration.

Until the final triumph of Christianity, the cult of Osiris, Isis, Ra, remained nominally dominant. Long after the nationalisation of Christianity, many of the ceremonies of the older Faith continued in use

Only on two occasions did the splendour of the ancient gods suffer a brief eclipse. We are told (in his disfavour), that Khufu, builder of the Great Pyramid, shut up the temples and forbade the worship of the gods. Abuses had crept into the temple precincts and vitiated priestly administration. These abuses he determined to rectify or to abolish. The reforms which he inaugurated probably resulted in the increased prestige of the priesthood of Ra, the

Sun-God, and the additional honour accorded to that deity

The second occasion was many centuries later, when Akhenaten, another royal innovator, swept aside the worship of Ptah, Osiris, Ra, and constituted Monotheism a State Religion

But the old faith was imbedded too deeply in the hearts of the people and the traditions of their priests to be thus lightly discarded. Aten-worship, which flourished during the lifetime of its founder, declined beneath the sway of his successor, and, under Tutankhamen passed into oblivion. Once more the old gods rose up victorious

They are dead now, but certain ceremonies which once graced their ritual are with us still. Of such survivals is the wedding ring. Here East and West join hands. When an English bridegroom with the espousal ring endows his bride with all his worldly goods, he renders an unwitting homage to Osiris

And although the gods are dead, the mystery which shrouded their cradle lingers, and still baffles our endeavour and eludes our vision, and with romantic glamour gilds their grave

The different renderings of the names, Akhenaton—Akhenaten, Rameses—Ramses—Ramessu, are in accordance with the authorities cited. Professor Breasted writes Ikhnaton.

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